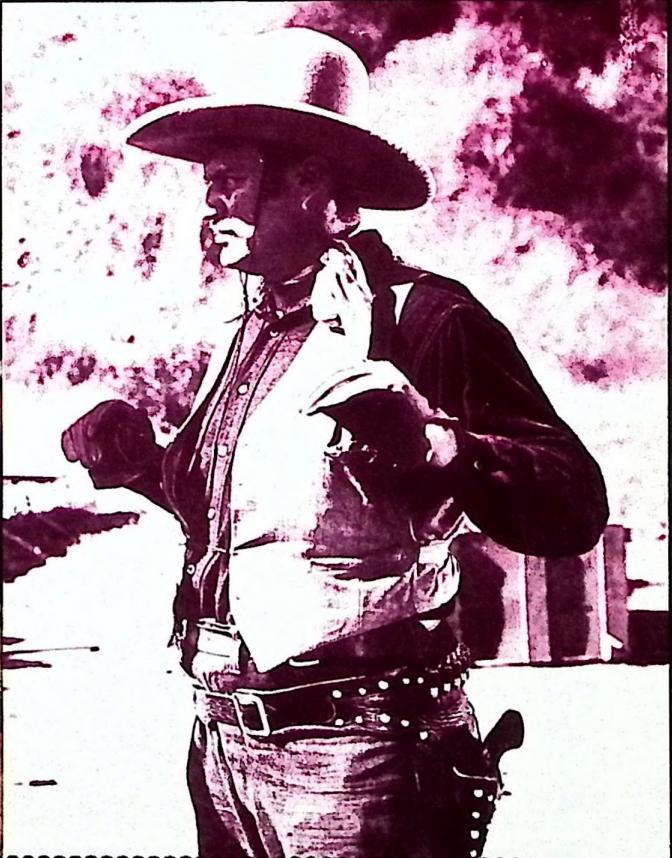


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# SERIAL WORLD



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# SERIAL WORLD

VOL. 4, NO. 33

A Quarterly publication dedicated to the motion picture serial

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**BACK ISSUES** — See pages 29-30

**OUR THANKS THIS ISSUE TO:** Bobb Lynes, Jim Stringham, Mario DeMarco, Ron Vivian, Chuck McCleary, Eric Hoffman, Norm Lynch, John Cardello, Tom Weaver. Special thanks to Jim Stringham and Eric Hoffman this issue.

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## SERIAL SHOWCASE

BY JEFF WALTON  
EDITOR SERIAL WORLD



\*\*\*\*\*



Late congrats to TERRY FROST who tied the knot with Ms. Marion Carney on Saturday, November 20th. Frosty has been a widower for the past nine years. We wish the newly weds many years of cliffhanging thrills.

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Well gang, this issue we got something for everyone. Serials are back thanks to the Educational Channel in the South. Random Thoughts will take you into the latest serial world happenings, thank you Norm Lynch. Our hero of the year, Ralph Byrd is back in BLAKE of SCOTLAND YARD. The Black Book is a rare serial we'll cover as is The Range Fighter. We'll begin our adventures with THE RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY. Take a peek at Brenda Starr and in a SERIAL WORLD exclusive we'll show you LYLE TALBOT (Chick Carter) as he looks today and of course RICHARD ALEXANDER.

Another little plug. Don't forget our other publications — SERIAL WORLD RE-PRINTS (4 issues available) FUNNY BUSINESS (2 issues available), FAVORITE WESTERNS (9 issues available) and MOVIE MELODIES (our 1st issue now available). Details on the back pages.

# BLAKE OF SCOTLAND YARD

By Jim Stringham

## CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE...

### Chapter 3: Cleared Mysteries

Zegaloff orders the detective — whom the Scorpion had assured him was dead — revived. Jerry climbs out of the well when his enemies leave. The Scorpion discovers that Blake had substituted a false radium tube which produced a harmless beam, thus surviving the death ray. Threatened with Hope being tortured, the detective radios Mallow Hall and instructs Bobby to retrieve her foxskin, which conceals the real tube, and deliver it to Daggett. Obeying, the boy finds a note attached: "If this fur is delivered to anyone, notify Scotland Yard at once. This supersedes all other orders. J.B." Bobby hands the skin over to Daggett, and the butler drives off with two henchmen. Then, the boy contacts Henderson at the yard. The inspector broadcasts an alert to patrol cars in the area.

Mimi is sympathetic to Hope, and urges Julot to spare the girl. Later, he sees her sneaking toward the room where the girl is imprisoned. He roughs her up in the course of an Apache dance, then hurls a knife into a wall poster with a warning that the next one will go between her pretty shoulders. The Scorpion orders her held with the other prisoner. Jerry sees her taken out and KOs the thug guarding her. Julot goes to check on the girls. Meanwhile, the Scorpion prepares to test the death ray on Sir James Blake when the tube is delivered.

Finding the gang's arsenal, Sheehan arms himself with tear gas grenades. He hurls them at his enemies, then pulls Blake from the room in the confusion, jamming the door shut behind them. Hope tries to sneak out in Mimi's clothing. Blake and Jerry see her at the top of a stairway. Then, Julot hurls a knife. The two are horrified to see it slam into her back. She falls down the stairs.

### Chapter 4: The Mystery of the Silver Fox

Mimi, fearing Julot's knife, had placed a flat cushion beneath the jacket when she helped Hope don her outfit. The girl is only stunned by the fall. Mimi shoots down Julot, then shows Jerry and the others a way out. The gang breaks out of the gas filled room to find them gone. In England, constables pick up Bobby and go after Daggett's car. A running gunfight ends when they shoot out a tire, cracking up the vehicle. They battle the heavies, capturing Daggett and Nicky. Bobby, recovering the fur, sees Adolph escape on foot. The officers drive off with their prisoners and the foxskin. The boy trails Adolph to London. At the waterfront dive, he hears the man telephone the Scorpion in Paris. The spy's crone spots him, and she and Adolph lock the boy in a closet. Blake's party and the Scorpion group head separately for England.

While questioning Daggett and Nicky, Sir James discovers that the radium tube is missing from the fur. He deduces that Bobby may have removed it for safekeeping. Charles calls to report the boy missing from Mallow Hall. Blake immediately drives Hope and Jerry back, while Henderson follows with his men. Bobby hides the tube in a pencil in a coat hanging in the closet. When a search of the boy produces no results, the Scorpion decides to use him as bait for a trap. His men plant explosives in the road to Blake's estate. The detective spots the boy in an enemy car and gives chase. As his auto passes over the bomb, the Scorpion fires it, blasting the vehicle from the road.



After capturing a guard, Jerry arms himself with tear gas grenades for an attempt to rescue Blake from the Apache den in Paris.

### Chapter 5: Death in the River

As the gang moves in on the overturned car, Blake and Jerry climb out and pile into them. Adolph ties up Bobby and runs to join the others. The boy breaks loose, grabs a tree limb, and pitches in. The melee ends when Henderson arrives with reinforcements. The heavies escape.

Later, Polinka arrives at Mallow Hall, claiming to have car trouble. Henderson gives him a ride back to London, along with Doctor Marshall. Blake and Jerry look after them with obvious speculation. Bobby tries to locate the Scorpion's riverside hideout for Sir James, giving him a good general idea of its location. The detective phones Henderson at the yard, then prepares a disguise. The inspector orders Nicky and Daggett taken to Mallow Hall. The car breaks down en route. As he works on the engine, the Scorpion men run off, speeded along by carefully ill-aimed shots. A rural type — Blake in disguise — picks them up and drives them to Limehouse.

The Scorpion stalks Mallow Hall, searching for the radium tube. Bobby sees him and shouts. Jerry finds the boy gone, spots an open wall panel, and goes through after jamming it open. Hope also enters the passageway. Realizing he is followed, the Scorpion drops Bobby and prepares an ambush. He stuns Sheehan with a swung chain. Blake drops the spies near their hideout, but is spotted by the beggar woman when he tries to follow them. Warned, they turn on the detective. The hag slugs him from behind, and the gunmen heave him into the Thames. In the tunnel, Hope sees the Scorpion, apparently unconscious. As she approaches, he suddenly comes to life and seizes the girl.

### Chapter 6: The Criminal Shadow

Hope realizes that Jerry Sheehan is holding her. Apparently, the Scorpion had placed the mask and costume on the American to cover his getaway. Blake grasps a rope as the current pulls him into a sewer, and, when his enemies leave,

pulls himself to safety. He follows them to their hideout, where the Scorpion appears with Bobby. Sir James hears the boy, questioned while apparently semi-conscious, spin a tall tale of hiding the radium tube behind a wallstone at the lodge house. He is given the pencil to make a diagram of its location. The Scorpion goes after it with Adolph and Pedro. Daggett gets a glimpse of Blake at the door, and the detective rushes in to battle the gangsters. He gains the upper hand after Bobby heaves a stool into one of the gunmen. The hag goes for help. Bobby phones Henderson that they are behind Pier 17, but the Duchess rips the wires out. The yard man leads a flying squad toward the hideout. More heavies close in from two sides, and Blake is disarmed after shooting down one of them. The police arrive to end the fight. Some gangster are captured, but Daggett and others escape. The Duchess jumps into the river and disappears beneath the dark waters. Henderson takes Bobby and Sir James to the lodge.

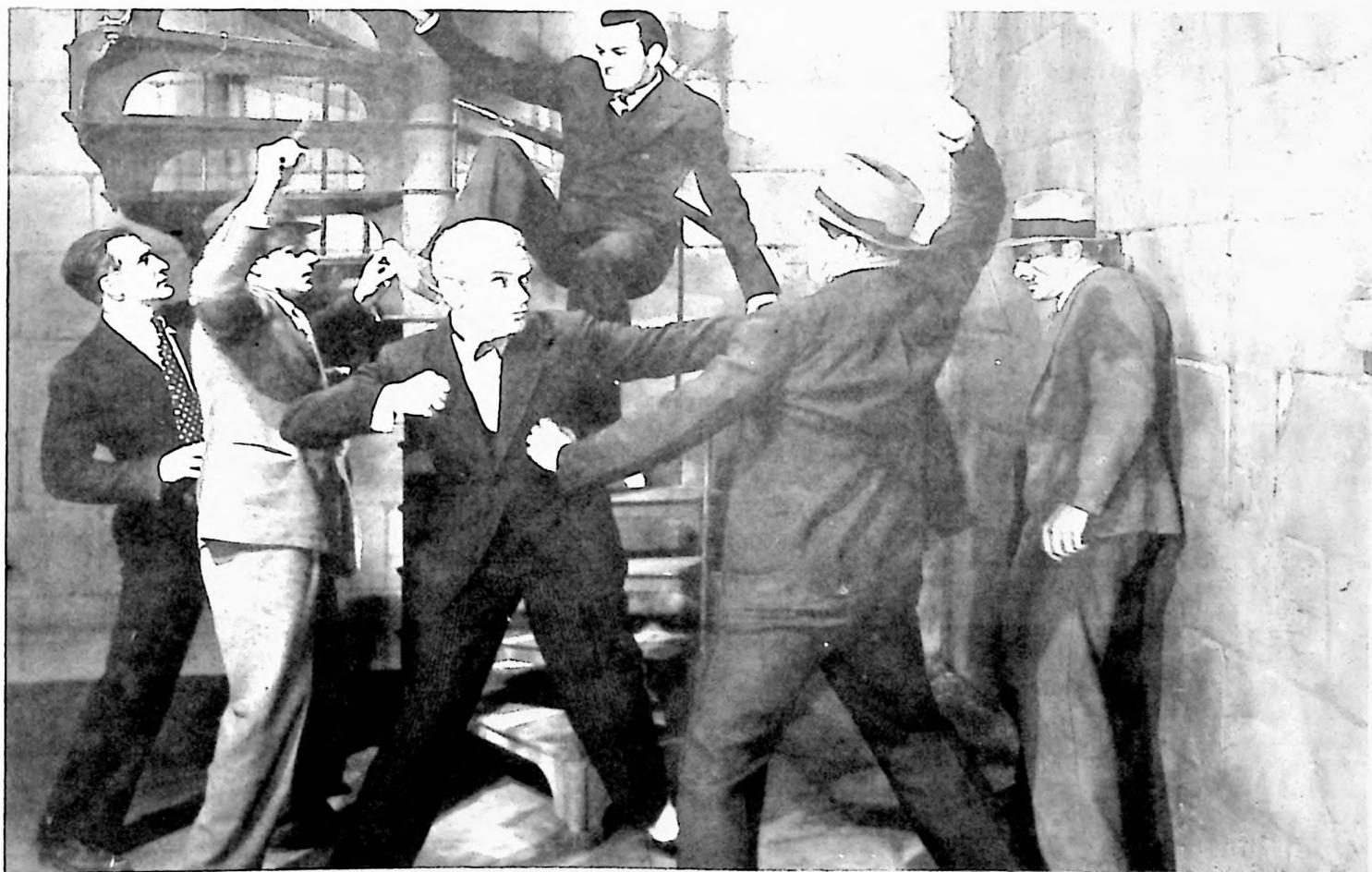
Hope and Jerry, searching the cellars, find the stairway to the lodge. Inside when the Scorpion gang bursts in, both are captured. The master spy removes the loose stone, reaches into the hole — and finds only a mousetrap which snaps on his hand. Daggett arrives with word that Blake has the tube and is on the way with police. They take their prisoners into the tunnel. The Scorpion lights the fuse to an explosive charge to close the way behind them. Henderson sends his men to surround the lodge, then enters the place with Jimmie. It is deserted, but Blake notices that a lamp is still hot. They enter the tunnel, the only other way out. Bobbie runs into the lodge after them. As the yard men approach the explosives, they detonate. The tunnel collapses around them.

## Chapter 7: Face to Face

Spotting the fuse, Blake shouts a warning and shoves Henderson back. Bobby brings the detectives. The Scorpion sees them dig Blake and Henderson out of the debris. He posts Pedro to guard the prisoners, then leaves with his other men. The police search those tunnels still open. Later, Blake assures Marshall and Polinka that the death ray will be useless to the spies. He is convinced that the Scorpion is someone familiar with Mallow Hall and the movement of its residents. The doctor catches a ride to London with Polinka to report their progress to the Geneva Committee.

Jerry deliberately antagonizes Pedro to cover Hope while she scrapes her bonds against a protruding spike. Breaking free, she clubs the man with a heavy object and frees Sheehan. Jerry overpowers the heavy in a quick fight. Blake finds Bobby and the pencil missing, and Charles tells of seeing the boy enter Polenka's car. Henderson and Sir James speculate that he is following up on some lead. Then, Jerry and Hope arrive with their prisoner and the Scorpion's abandoned costume. Pedro, under questioning, can give no names. He details a system of numbered agents of the Scorpion (Number 1) who receive orders through Number 7 — the hag from the Limehouse hideout.

Dropping Marshall off, Polinka drives to the waterfront hangout. He avoids a detective watching the area and enters a building. Then, Bobby sees the Scorpion appear and contact the crone. She is sent to summon Count Basil to "the usual place." Inside, the master spy removes the death ray from a cupboard as the count enters. He is ready to turn it over as



Blake and Jerry battle Pedro, Peyton, Nicky, and Adolph in the cellars of Mallow Hall. Note Herman Brix, somewhat disguised at the right.



**Searching a tunnel beneath Mallow Hall, Jerry Sheehan is ambushed by the Scorpion.**

soon as he checks guarantees of payment from Zealoff's principals. Bobby sneaks toward the room only to be seized and dragged away. As Basil produces the papers, a trapdoor in the ceiling opens — and a claw appears. A second Scorpion drops down to stand face to face with the first.

#### **Chapter 8: The Fatal Trap**

Bobby is held by a detective who has taken him to prevent interference with a trap for the spies. The new Scorpion pulls the mask off his double to reveal Blake. As the detective knocks him down, Zegaloff smashes a coat tree into him. Taking the ray projector, the spy leader exits with Basil through a hidden panel in the closet. Henderson breaks in with his men, but they are detoured by the open ceiling trap. Bobby shows Blake the house where he first spotted Basil, and they see him inside. Blake remains to cover the place until a watch can be set. Henderson and the boy leave, while the hag looks on. Then, some unseen person grabs her and drags her into a doorway. At Mallow Hall, Charles escorts Polinka into the lab in time to hear Bobby explain a theory to Hope, Jerry, and Marshall: If he were the Scorpion, he would hide the death ray in the least likely place of all — the hall itself. Leaving, he and the girl decide to search the tunnels beneath the building. They discover that the batteries are missing from their flashlights, but press on through the dark cellars. The Scorpion appears, sees them, and slinks off.

Count Basil, startled by an anonymous phone call, hurriedly packs and leaves. Blake sends a Sergeant Dickens to tail him, then goes to Henderson at the yard. Believing the count will flee to Paris, they head for Mallow Hall to pick up the others and follow. Jerry, unable to locate Hope, Bobby, or even Charles, enters the tunnels. The youngsters realize they

are lost. The Scorpion meets his men in the chamber where they are guarding the death ray. He sends them after Hope and Bobby with orders to let them pass — but to see that they never return. The hag also enters the cellars. The youngsters find their way to the room just vacated by the Scorpion. Bobby starts to light a candle...and finds it still hot. They spot the ray machine, and go to it, unaware that the Scorpion is creeping through the door behind them. Hope screams as she sees him. Bobby heaves a chain at him, and they run out with the ray. The gang appears before them, and the master spy comes up behind. Then, Jerry appears. He tackles the heavies, shouting to the youngsters to abandon the ray and run for help. They get clear. The American is quickly overpowered. Bobby sends Hope on when they stumble onto the way out, then heads back after the machine. The hag leaps out of the darkness. Hope screams as she seizes her and carries her off.

#### **Chapter 9: Parisian House Tops**

Reacting to Hope's scream, Bobby runs back and tackles the crone. Their struggle ends when he grabs a fallen gun and fires a shot after her. Blake and Henderson enter the hall, hear the battle over the sound magnifier, and enter the cellars. They are ambushed and knocked out. The gang escapes with the ray projector, heading for Saxon Field where a plane is waiting to take them to Paris. Later, Charles escorts Marshall in as Blake receives Dickens' report that Count Basil has flown to France. The doctor volunteers to join the others in pursuit of the spy. Only Bobby remains behind, assigned to watch the butler.

In Paris, Blake meets Mimi near the Apache cafe. Jerry and Hope are inside as Ezra Hopkins and wife, American tourists. Henderson and Marshall see Polinka and Zegaloff enter the

place separately. The count hands Julot a note he has received: "We are watched. Go directly to the upper room." He goes up. Seeing this, Hope drunkenly forces Julot to do a violent Apache dance with her, during which she gets the paper. He realizes it is gone, sees Henderson join Hope and Jerry, and hurries off. Blake and Mimi enter a sewer leading to an adjoining building. Seeing them headed for the roof, Julot goes up by another way. Marshall enters the building. He encounters Polinka, tries to stop him, and is knocked out in a brief fight. Julot alerts the Scorpion gang that Sir James is coming across the roof tops. As they move in, the Apache knocks the gun from the detective's hand. They fight. Adolph swings a length of pipe, knocking Blake into a skylight. He crashes through, falling to the room below.

## Chapter 10: Battle Royal

Blake lands on a bed. He sees Basil run from the room and follows him into a secret passage. The detective stumbles over Marshall in the dark, and, assisting him, learns of his encounter with Polinka. They head back to the cafe. Mimi has escaped in the confusion. Jerry and Hope put the slightly injured doctor into a taxi while Blake again enters the back rooms. Julot, meanwhile, clears everyone but his Apaches out of the place. The Scorpion is in the building with the death ray, observed by both Polinka and Sir James. The detective follows him into a room and covers him. He orders the spy to remove his mask — as Peyton grabs him from behind. The rest of the gang moves in, and Blake is knocked unconscious after a hopeless fight. The Scorpion has him tied and placed on a balcony with a noose around his neck for a demonstration of the death ray. Polinka appears behind the spy, slugs him, and runs off with the machine.

Surrounded by menacing Apaches in the cafe, Jerry, Hope, and Henderson hurl trays into the gunmen, routing them. The battle spills into the adjoining room where Blake is held. Mimi follows Polinka and knocks him out. As the fighting men slam into the beams supporting the balcony, Hope sees her uncle's danger and runs to help. Then, the balcony collapses beneath him.



As Bobby tells Hope that a candle he found in one of the dungeons beneath Mallow Hall is still warm, the Scorpion creeps up behind them.

## Chapter 11: The Burning Fuse

Blake frees his hands and grasps the rope above the noose. Then, Hope grabs a gun and fires a shot that severs the line, allowing him to drop safely to the floor below. Gendarmes pour into the place. Most of the Apaches are captured, but the Scorpion men assist their master through a secret doorway and Polinka escapes by another route. Mimi turns the ray over to Blake. Back in England, Hope and Jerry rent the room over Basil's at the Limehouse lodging. The owner, a Scorpion agent, reports this to his chief after locking John, his retarded giant of a son, away in a barred room. Learning that Blake has invited all concerned parties to Mallow Hall for a report to the Geneva Committee, the Scorpion tells his men he will make no further attack until the ray is sent to the League of Nations. Hope and Jerry hear this over a dictograph from their room. When they leave, the spy chief gives different instructions to the gang.

The gunmen plant explosives in the cellars of Mallow Hall. Bobby is dragged through a secret panel, and, apparently unconscious, deposited in a corner. The boy manages to pick up a gun, and, as they work the explosives, he pries the slugs from the cartridges. He covers them with the weapon, but is quickly disarmed by Peyton. The Scorpion has him tied up near the prepared charge, lights the fuse, then leaves with his men. Bobby burns his bonds off with acid, and pulls the fuse. Polinka and Marshall appear briefly and late at the meeting. As Blake addresses the committee, Bobby bursts in with news of the attempted bombing. Hope locates the gang on the ray's visual screen atop a hill overlooking the hall. Sir James sends Jerry and Henderson to cut off their retreat, with two detectives left behind to guard the ray. He goes to circle them, climbing the hill on foot. The Scorpion sees him appear behind Peyton and shouts a warning. The gunman turns and fires. Blake staggers, then falls down the steep bank.

## Chapter 12: The Roofs of Limehouse

Bobby, watching on the television screen, realizes that Peyton must have fired the bullets he had rendered harmless. Sir James rises and heads back up the hill to meet Jerry and Henderson. The gang has fled, dropping off the Scorpion as they leave the grounds. Polinka enters the hall, hurls a gas bomb into the group in the lab, and drives off with the death ray. Meanwhile, Jerry and the others chase after the escaping heavies in a running gunfight which continues until one of his tires is shot out. Marshall sees Polinka and jumps onto his running board, but is knocked away. He runs to Blake's party to report the encounter.

Sir James believes that Polinka will sell the machine to the Scorpion's buyer: Count Basil Zegaloff. He disguises himself as the owner of the waterfront house, and, approaching the place, receives instructions from the hag to leave the back door to the roof open for use that night. He captures the real landlord, ties and gags him, then leaves the man in a closet. John sees this. Henderson and Jerry arrive to man the dictograph. The Scorpion men cut a spy hole through the ceiling of their room. Blake signals his friends, though, and they rig silhouettes to the dictograph's recorder that let the heavies see shadows that suggest they are walking around the flat. He leads them to the roof. John is maddened by the sight of the intruders. Seeking the landlord, Peyton finally understands the boy's signals and finds and releases his father. Spotting the setup in Jerry's room, Peyton shouts a warning to the gang while the owner frees his son from the barred cell. The gunmen attack, knocking Henderson into the river below. Jerry is about to dive after him when he is struck by another

heavy. The two fall from the roof. As Blake struggles with a gangster at the top of the stairs, John climbs toward him. The giant seizes the detective and begins to choke the life out of him.

### Chapter 13: The Sting of Scorpion

Blake breaks the hold, then overcomes the brute strength of his assailant with scientific wrestling. In a moment, he has the boy under control and forces him back into his room. Henderson and Jerry beat their opponents in the river. The yard man drags Adolph ashore while Peyton, Daggett, and Nicky escape in a boat. Later, Blake admits Zegaloff to the house. The hag appears on the roof, and, observed by Jerry and Henderson, carries the death ray to the count's room. Hope and Bobby, meanwhile, investigating noises, see the Scorpion leave the laboratory at Mallow Hall and drive off. They follow in another car. The crone offers to sell Count Basil the machine. When he declines to deal with her, she removes her disguise, and, revealed as Polinka, dons the Scorpion outfit. Bobby sees the Scorpion contact his men, and goes with Hope to warn Jerry. They move in as the two Scorpions meet and fight. One escapes with the ray, and the youngsters follow him into the room with the closet and ceiling escape panels. Bobby throws a lasso over his foot as he goes through the overhead trap. Jerry and Sir James hear the struggle and run to help. The spy operates the ray as they burst in. Seeing their peril, Blake shoves the others behind a desk. The Scorpion fires the death ray. There is an explosion, and the room collapses around them.

### Chapter 14: The Scorpion Unmasked

The Scorpion tries to carry the ray machine through a hole blasted in the well, but Blake revives in time to grab it. The spy flees, leaving the machine in the possession of Sir James, as the others pick themselves up. Henderson moves in with his men, capturing Polinka and Zegaloff. They see the Scorpion escape in a boat with Nicky and Daggett. Certain that the master spy is someone who knew of the trap he had planned, Blake leads the others in a race to Mallow Hall. Charles answers the door. Although he claims to have been sleeping, the man is fully dressed beneath his robe. Doctor Marshall is in his bed, in pajamas, reading.

Later, Sir James recalls encounters with the Scorpion to determine who could or could not be the spy. We see the fight at the lodge house, and Blake's impersonation of Count Basil in Paris. These events suggest Marshall, but Jimmy had later found him knocked unconscious by Polinka. The baron was another suspect until the real Scorpion appeared when he tried to deal with Count Basil. Henderson is certain Marshall is their man, while Hope and Bobby suspect Charles.

The death ray is safe in the custody of Scotland Yard, but Blake has its case. He makes considerable show of depositing it in the hall vault. Charles is ordered to stand guard. Later, the Scorpion appears. Hope and Bobby follow him to the lab. There, as the spy leader works on the safe, Blake moves in. The Scorpion spots him and fires, but Sir James hurls a flashlight at him, then grabs the man. Bobby, Hope, Jerry, and Henderson close in as the detective removes his enemy's mask. They look on in amazement as the face of the Scorpion is finally revealed.



## Chapter 15: The Trap is Sprung

The Scorpion — Doctor Marshall — acts in that one moment of stunned surprise. He breaks loose and runs through the passage to the cellars. Bobby realizes that he can bring the building down around them by firing the explosives planted earlier. The group finds him there, but holds back when he threatens to detonate the charge. Then, a door opens behind the Scorpion. Charles appears and pulls him away from the bomb. Marshall knocks the butler down and runs off. Henderson's thanks to the servant make it obvious that the man is really a yard detective. Blake and the inspector go after Marshall, sending the others back to the hall. Charles is to bring a car around to block the other end of the tunnel.

Peyton, Daggett, and Nicky have broken through the debris blocking the tunnel after the earlier explosion. They meet their chief and escort him back. Realizing he is followed, the Scorpion drops behind and hides as Blake and Henderson go by. The two are spotted by the gang. When they try to block the trap door, Henderson fires through it, driving them back. The heavies get to their cars as the detectives emerge from the lodge house. The yard man shoots out a tire. He and

Blake are on top of the gunmen as they pile out of the vehicle. Charles drives up in time to lend a hand, and the fight ends with all of the gang in custody.

Jerry is calling Scotland Yard from the lab when Marshall appears, grabs Bobby as a shield, and shoots the phone from his hand. He demands the ray machine. Blake returns, but the Scorpion forces him to open the vault and then stand back with the others. He reaches for the case — and is knocked down by a blast of electricity. Gripped by the current, he is unable to release the metal box. Blake enjoys the spectacle for a moment, then disconnects the electrical trap he had prepared. He gives Jerry the privilege of placing the handcuffs on their enemy.

Finally, Sir James Blakes stands before the League of Nations to present the death ray to that world organization. His speech is solemn, but Jerry Sheehan and Bobby exchange winks. At Mallow Hall, later, Blake and Bobby enter the laboratory as Hope and Jerry kiss. Bobby urges the detective to amscray, then has to explain that this is slang for scram. Still in the dark, Sir James decides that they had better leave.

## The End

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Stephen Collins, starring as dashing expatriate American flyer Jake Cutter, brings to ABC's new high-styled dramatic adventure a richly varied background of roles amassed during his 13 years in theatre, films, and television.

The character of a young American struggling to operate a small airline in a remote corner of the world is one that Stephen Collins may have been destined to play. At the time of the actor's birth, his father was an executive of Panagra Airlines, a small American carrier operating out of Lima, Peru. Stephen was born in Des Moines, Iowa, where his parents, Cyrus and Madeline Collins, were visiting his mother's family. He lived in Peru until age six months, when his family, which includes two older brothers, moved to Hastings-on-Hudson, a small town north of New York City.

Stephen's first passion was baseball. He harbored a secret desire to act as well, but shyness kept him off the stage. The roll of American composer Stephen Collins Foster in a grade school production was his only acting experience until his junior year in high school when he won a private audition for a production of "Our Town." He won the role of Emily's father, Mr. Webb, then went on to play the lead in his senior play.

At the same time, Stephen's first venture into music laid to rest any vestiges of audience phobia. Although he had never played an instrument, a friend asked Steve to help form a rock 'n' roll band. He learned to play bass guitar by rote, and was hooked. Music carried Stephen into his first years at Amherst College in Massachusetts, where he played in several bands.

He broke into college theatre when he was cast as the Last Tempter in a production of T.S. Elliot's "Murder in the Cathedral."

"Never, from that time on, have I not been either rehearsing or performing," Stephen explains. He appeared in 22 more plays at Amherst, winning an acting award for his portrayal of Kilroy in "Camino Real." At the close of his senior year, a student production of an original rock musical based on Brecht's "Baal" brought to Amherst Joseph Papp, producer of the New York Shakespeare Festival and the then fledgling Public Theatre. At a backstage party Stephen confided to Papp a dream to perform Shakespeare in Central Park. Papp asked for a picture and resume, and to Stephen's astonishment called 10 days later to offer the small role of Valentine in "Twelfth Night." Stephen graduated from Amherst as an employed New York actor.

At summer's end he was cast opposite Barbara Rush in the first national touring company of "40 Carats." The tour took him to Los Angeles where he made his television debut in a bit part in Burt Reynolds' ABC series, "Dan August." He returned to New York, and after several short runs off-Broadway he was cast in his first Broadway production, Michael Weller's "Moonchildren." He played MacDuff in Joseph Papp's production of "Macbeth" at Lincoln Center, then created the outrageous role of Detective Michael Brick in the Tony Award-winning comedy, "The Ritz." During its run he was cast for his first motion picture role, Hugh Sloan in "All the President's Men."

At the end of filming, Stephen elected to remain in Los Angeles. He made his first telefilm, "Brinks: The Great Robbery," and guest-starred on several series. In March of 1977, in what he describes as "one of the most wonderfully fulfilling moments of my life," he simultaneously opened in the character role of a stuffy fat judge in "The New York Idea" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music under the direction of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Frank Dunlop, opened on the screen in the counter-culture feature "Between the Lines," and saw his starring role in the novel for television, "The Rhinemann Exchange," air on NBC. He later returned to the Brooklyn Academy to play Andre in "The Three Sisters."

Stephen's subsequent motion picture and television credits are a testimony to his versatility. Sharing roles with two monumental stars, he played William Holden's character in Billy Wilde's "Fedora," and the young Joshua Turner, Henry Fonda's character in the ABC dramatic special, "Summer Solstice." He starred as the heroic Decker in "Star Trek: The Motion Picture," and in a different vein as a cynical alcoholic in the telefilm, "The Henderson Monster." He starred as Edith Wharton's lover in the PBS biography, "Edith Wharton: Looking Back," and the cause of Shirley MacLaine's adultery in the romantic film comedy, "Loving Couples."

Prior to filming the pilot of "Tales of the Gold Monkey," Stephen starred in the off-Broadway comedy "Beyond Therapy," then participated in Robert Redford's month-long workshop for independent filmmakers at the Sundance Institute in Utah. Nearly unrecognizable in a bald pate, he played villain James Larrabee in the Williamstown Theatre production of "Sherlock Holmes," which was taped for cable television. In the fall he moved to Munich to portray Nazi organizer Karl Hanke in ABC's mini-series, "Inside the Third Reich."

Stephen remains a staunch fan of the New York Mets, and of rock music. A practitioner of Transcendental Meditation for six years, he recently lectured at Maharishi International University in Iowa. Stephen makes his home in New York City and Los Angeles.

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## TV Raiders of 'The Gold Monkey'

By JAMES BROWN,  
L.A. Times Staff Writer

We take you now to the sleepy, tropical village of Boragora, where bronzed extras wander about wearing sarongs, where Hollywood goats and chickens struggle to find their marks and where the cast and crew of "Tales of the Gold Monkey," the new ABC adventure series premiering Sept. 22 at 9 p.m., attempt to get some work done despite the ubiquitous presence of the Universal Tour.

"Can we please get someone to keep those trams out of the area?" an assistant director fumes. "They're right in the middle of our shot!"

Stephen Collins, the star of "Gold Monkey," sighs and shrugs his shoulders. Co-star Roddy McDowall closes his eyes and meditates. Jack, the one-eyed dog who'll probably steal every scene he's in, curls up in the corner and goes to sleep. The tram, meanwhile, lingers on. The folks are certainly getting their \$9.50 worth.

"Hey, can we please do something about the tram?" the assistant director says again, almost pleadingly. Then, as an afterthought: "Larry, you can forget the pig for this shot..."

What is "Tales of the Gold Monkey" all about? First, it's an adventure story, set in a lush backwater pocket of the South Seas, circa 1938. Collins portrays Jake Cutter, an expatriate American pilot who flies passengers and cargo through the treacherous Marivella Islands.

McDowall is Louie, the lovably amoral French prefect of the island base. Jeff McKay is Corky, Cutter's seldom sober mechanic. Caitlin O'Heaney is Sarah, an American singer

who's really an agent for the government. And, of course, there'll be exotic villains, Nazis, double agents and the like to keep everyone busy from week to week.

There was more than a passing thought to "Raiders of the Lost Ark" in the scheduling of "Gold Monkey" by ABC. But producer Don Bellasario, the man responsible for the enormously successful "Magnum, P.I.," says the idea had been making the network rounds long before "Raiders" cashed in big.

"Quite frankly, we wouldn't be on the air without 'Raiders,'" Bellasario says, sitting in the comfortable Universal office that once belonged to Alfred Hitchcock. "But the fact is, I took this concept to two networks three years ago — and said I thought it would make a good series. They told me to make it contemporary and they'd consider it. But then came the success of 'Raiders' and all of a sudden we're timely."

Bellasario says that the idea for "Gold Monkey" was an outgrowth of the movies of his youth — the 1940s.

Bellasario came to Los Angeles to direct some commercials and, while he was out here, wrote several speculative scripts that eventually reached the hand of an agent.

"The agent asked me what I wanted to do," Bellasario said, "and I told him 'make films.' So he said fine, but that would take a couple of years. I then told him that I only had enough money for six weeks, and that's when we started to take a look at television."

Bellasario, who's an expert pilot, eventually got a script order for NBC's "Baa Baa Blacksheep" and that started it. "Steve Cannell (Blacksheep's executive producer) came to me after I turned in the script and said, 'Where have you been?' I thought he meant I was late for a meeting. What he really meant was that I had come along at just the right time."

From the first script, Bellasario went on to become story editor for "Blacksheep," then took over as the show's producer. A year later, he produced a season of "Battlestar Galactica" and then came "Magnum."

"I always had confidence in that project," Bellasario said of "Magnum, P.I." "The first year we were good and solid. The second year we exploded when the public got hold of Tom (Selleck). I always had faith that it would be a big hit. Hopefully, the same thing will happen with this show."

Boragoar — which, for TV historians, was once the "McHale's Navy" lagoon — is relatively quiet now. The Universal trams finally have gotten the message and filming goes on.

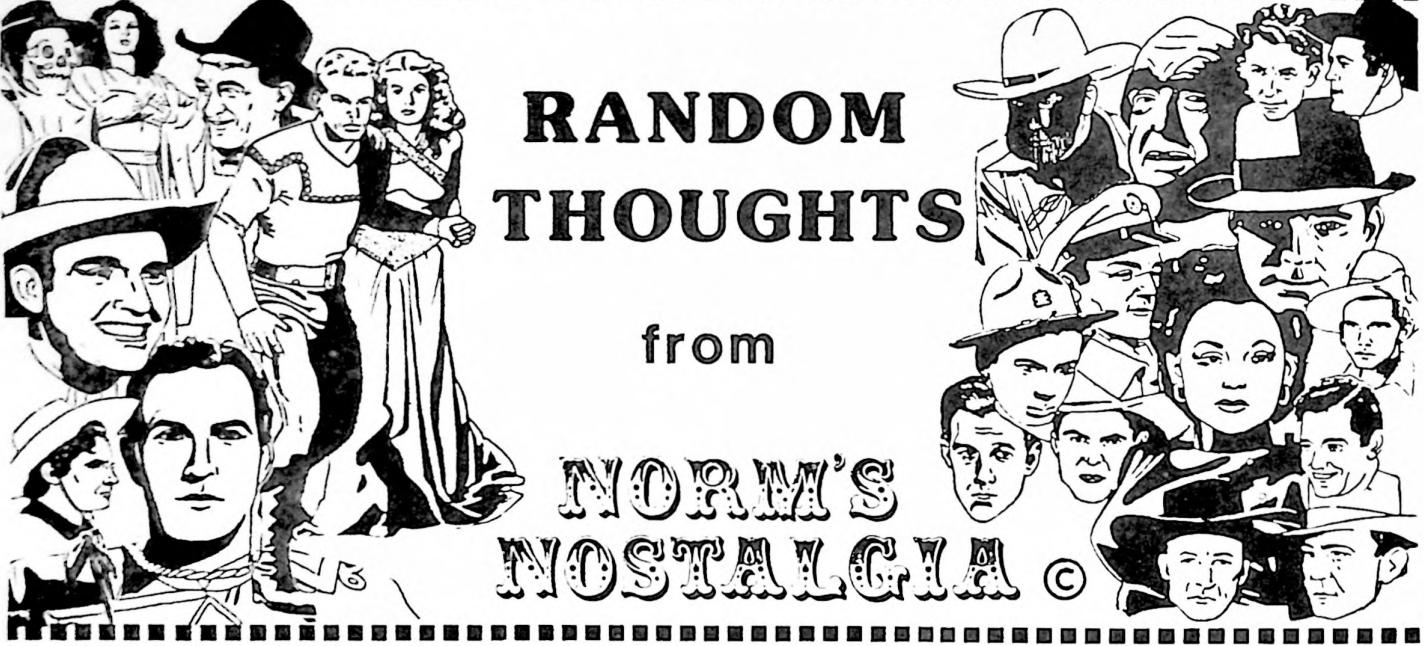
Stephen Collins, a busy actor most recently seen in "Inside the Third Reich," is decked out in archetypal, bandit pilot regalia — a worn leather jacket, three-day beard and a revolver tucked in his belt. There is no whip. Jake Cutter is not — repeat not — Indiana Jones.

"I haven't even seen 'Raiders,'" Collins said. "I came close a couple of times, but just never got around to it. Now I don't think I will see it until this project is over because it's frankly too much fun to say that I haven't."

Collins' prototype for Jake Cutter is the 1938 Howard Hawks film "Only Angels Have Wings" with Cary Grant. "That's the movie that clicked immediately," he said. "Don Bellasario had never seen it, so we arranged a screening and he agreed."

"The fun of doing a show like this is that we're all concerned with detail here. This is a period piece, and the more detail we can squeeze in, the better the show will be."

Just then, another Universal tram rolled by and stopped. This was definitely not the sort of detail that Collins had in mind. Ah, Universal...



# RANDOM THOUGHTS

from

## NORM'S NOSTALGIA ©

By Norm Lynch

### CHAPTER TWO

GOOD NEWS FOR SERIAL FANS! IN THE NICK OF TIME, a book on serials written by our very good friend, WILLIAM C. "BILL" CLINE, now has a publisher! Beginning in March, 1979, the book was serialized in THE BIG REEL, and all fans who clipped and saved the series (as I did) will now be able to add this fine publication to their bookshelves in book form. This is the most accurate book on serials ever written, and a must for every real fan. HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO BILL!...LLOYD M. "KIRK" KIRKLEY was in charge of the serial screening room at the Charlotte Convention last summer and everyone praises Lloyd for the fine job he did. Lloyd will again be at the helm this summer, and plans to show PERILS OF NYOKA and THE SPIDER'S WEB, two great favorites, plus others as yet unannounced. The Charlotte get-together is planned tentatively for July 7, 8, and 9...RAY NEILSON, Publicity Chairman for the Memphis Film Festival is really on the ball! On November 29, I received an announcement that this year's Festival will be held August 2, 3, 4, and 5. Guests include FRED SCOTT, CLAYTON MOORE, HENRY BRANDON and RICHARD WEBB. Webb was CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT on TV and starred in the serial THE INVISIBLE MONSTER for Republic in 1950. For information, write: MEMPHIS FILM FESTIVAL 100 N. Main Bldg., Suite 3008, Memphis TN 38103...Houston has a new TV station, Channel 20, which now is showing the old LONE RANGER TV shows. I was told that these shows had been withdrawn, but they're on every Saturday, along with THE CISCO KID. According to ADVERTISING AGE, we oldtimers (from 20 to 90) are keeping the shows alive. HOORAY for us!...JOHN W. SULLIVAN has been working for several years on a comic book on THE SHADOW serial starring the late VICTOR JORY. John's quiet determination is admirable!...Although THE PHANTOM EMPIRE was the first serial I ever followed, I didn't see the opening chapters, but began with the chapter where Queen Tika brought Gene Autry back to life from the dead. FAN-

TASTIC! (In those days, we believed everything we saw on the screen) but one thing always troubled me: Why did the Thunder Riders need special breathing apparatus on the surface, but their horses didn't? Maybe horses were superior creatures!...I have an unusual request from DR. WILLIAM WHITELAW. Does anyone know where the sound discs to the serial KING OF THE CONGO might be found? This was the FIRST serial released with accompanying sound, but it was in the days before soundtracks were a part of the film. The soundtrack was recorded on discs which were played separately from the film itself. Dr. Whitelaw would appreciate any help anyone can give him in locating these discs. Can anyone help? KEYE LUKE had a part on the REMINGTON STEELE TV show on Friday, November 26. Luke was in at least four serials, but I remember him primarily as Kato in the GREEN HORNET chapterplays...BILL BUCKO reports that the FLASH GORDON serials are being shown on WGN-TV in Chicago at 6 A.M. every Saturday. WGN has really gotten their money's worth out of these films; they were showing them on Sundays when I lived in Chicago in 1962 and '63. Bill is a teacher at a small private school in the Chicago area...C.H. NEEDHAM, JR. says he will pay top dollar for a copy of the shooting script of THE LONE RANGER serial. Anybody in serial land know of an existing script?...VARIETY reports that the five top moneymakers of all time are STAR WARS, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, JAWS, RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK and E.T. The two men who produced all five were inspired by the old movie serials. RAIDERS in turn has inspired two new TV shows. The first of these, TALES OF THE GOLD MONKEY, should be part of the Saturday morning kiddie line-up. The second, BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE, is a real winner with me. Based very, very loosely on the life of Columbia's first serial star, FRANK BUCK, (Let's face it, the show is pure fiction), the series causes me to recall many fond memories. In one show Buck was shot point-blank by a Nazi officer. He fell. Fade-out. 4 commercials. Fade-in. The nazis marched in-

to the jungle, leaving Buck for dead. He is merely unconscious. A medallion in his pocket deflected the bullet. I immediately recalled the end of Chapter Two of **THE LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN**. Remember? Slade shot the Ranger point-blank, he slumped in the saddle. **CONTINUED NEXT WEEK**. A week later, Slade's bullet was deflected by a bag of silver in the Ranger's pocket. In another Buck story, a Jap soldier threw a grenade under Buck's truck. Explosion. truck engulfed in flames. Fade-out. 4 commercials. Fade-in. Buck leaps out of truck just before explosion. Every serial I've ever seen has the hero or heroine leap from the car (truck, bus, plane, boat, wagon, rocket-car) just before the crash/explosion. The Buck show has strong characterizations, excellent camera work, interesting angle shots, and the kind of hero I liked as a kid. I hope it's around for a while!...**ERNEST GABRIELSON** is a high school teacher who also works at a Video tape rental store three hours a day. Also an ex-marine from Korea days, Ernest wonders why **DAREDEVILS OF THE WEST** is unavailable. Anybody

know the story on this?...Both the Price List Catalog and **SYNOPSIS! CHAPTER ONE** which I have advertised in the past in **SERIAL WORLD** are not out-of-print. I have no plans to print more at this time...On November 15 last year, on Channel 2 in Houston, the program **MORE REAL PEOPLE** repeated the **CLAYTON MOORE** segment previously shown on February 24, 1980. I still get a thrill out of the standing ovation Moore got from the Real People audience. Clayton kept us on the edge of our chairs during the days of Saturday afternoon matinee serials, whether he was hero or villain. He was and is a fine man!...As I write this second column for **SERIAL WORLD**, the first column has not been published. So, if you have written, be patient please. And if there is any serial activity in your area, I'd like to hear about it. I don't have time to answer letters individually, but I do like to know if serials are being shown anywhere as a matter of policy in theatres, conventions, or on TV. My address is **NORM'S NOSTALGIA**, 1726 Maux, Houston, TX 77043.



## CHAPTER 3 .

## BRIDGE OF DEATH

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN U.S.A. 52-9800

**CLAYTON MOORE**...seen here in his serial days appeared on **MORE REAL PEOPLE** repeated recently in the Houston area.

# Filming old Brenda Starr series involved 4 weeks of toil, hot beer

By JOAN WOODBURY WILCOXON

*Editor's note: Joan Woodbury Wilcoxon, now retired from Hollywood and the movies, lives in Palm Springs and has been contributing feature stories to the Daily Enterprise since 1962. The Brenda Starr serial which she writes about here was only one of many movies she made. In a recent article in the Enterprise she described, among other things, her days as a western movie queen playing opposite Tim McCoy. "Every now and then I turn on the TV late at night and there I am," she says.*

PALM SPRINGS — She's back!!!!

Who's she?

Me.

Who's me?

Brenda Starr.

I thought we put her in the can 25 years ago.

We did. But according to this morning's paper, there she is big as life, the girl reporter, still getting herself into hot water.

You'd think by this time she'd have sense enough to simmer down, transfer to the women's page and write recipes.

When I immortalized Brenda Starr on the screen in 1945 there was a war on, my husband was shooting up the Aleutians, and I had a very small baby to feed. Any job looked good.

Besides, for once I had no competition.

For three good reasons.

- First, I looked like the lady — bat wing eyebrows, rippling, wavy hair below my shoulders, football shoulders that believably could throw a punch, and a voice that rang with authority when the confrontation came with the bad guys.

- Second, I was a quick study. Thirteen episodes had to be wrapped up in four weeks of shooting and I had a reputation for getting scenes into the can in a minimum of takes.

- Third — nobody wanted the job. Nobody in their right mind wanted thirteen harrowing, death-defying episodes with a script that looked like the New York telephone directory.

Nothing could be shot in sequence. All location shots were filmed the first week, interiors the last three. On the closing night, with the beer getting hot, while waiters were setting up the studio-cast party, I did every one of my telephone scenes which ran to 19 pages of solid dialogue!

Because Brenda ALWAYS wore a suit in those days, I wore one ad nauseum. Four, to be exact, were made. Three for me, one for my double who took all the falls. By the end of the fourth week that grey flannel midi-length pin stripe could have played the role without me.

For the new generations who spend their Saturdays eyeing Myra Beckenridge maybe I should explain what a serial is.

In the good old days mamas could safely leave Junior at the movies on Saturday for the price of a cheap cigar.

In exchange he got a violently clean western where the good guy always wore a white hat in the close-ups and always rode a white horse in the long shots so Junior wouldn't get confused, and his hair was barbered to within an inch of his ears.

Junior also enjoyed a couple of comics, early Disney's in sharp black and white, a segment of Fox Movietone news, which was trademarked "The Eyes of the World" until sound rocked the screen and they added "The Ears" to the title.

Then he got what he really came for.

Pearl White.

In the early days of movies Pearl White became the undisputed queen of the Saturday one-episode thrillers in "The Perils of Pauline."

Every Saturday she got herself out of some unbelievable mishap in the first five minutes, went a couple of rounds with the plot, what there was of it, kissed her boy friend and wound up tied to the railroad tracks with the 5:15 barreling down on her pearly body.

All week long Junior bit his nails wondering how in the dickens she'd get out of that one. But she did. And he was there the following week to cheer her on.

Serials were still a big thing in 1945 and Brenda Starr this nation's most avidly read comic strip. Columbia Studios made a bundle and for 13 weeks I baby-sat Junior every Saturday afternoon.

I gave him plenty of violently clean fun to worry about for the next six days.

Today of course the film would be dated in one respect.

No matter how independent and self-willed I was, I always got saved by my co-star Kane Richman. Brenda Starr in those days was a feminist.

Dale Messick, its writer, will have to change all that now. To stay up with the new woman's Lib movement she'll probably have Brenda carry her boy friend out of the burning building and give him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for the big love scene.



# SERIAL COLLECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

By Paul McBride

**DAYS OF THRILLS AND ADVENTURE.** by ALAN G. BARBOUR.

Published by Collier Books, New York, (Paperback), 1970. 168 + XXII pages. The Macmillan Co. (Hardback), 1970.

**CLIFFHANGER** by ALAN G. BARBOUR.

Published by A&W Publishers Inc. New York, (Hardback), 1977. 248 pages. Citadel Press, Secaucus, N.H. (Paperback), 1979.

For many years now, Alan Barbour has been active in the promotion and popularization of the motion picture sound serial. Initially, through his own Screen Facts Press and later through commercial publishing houses, Alan has striven "to try and present an entertaining picture of the color and excitement the serial gave two generations of youngsters whose Saturday afternoon sessions at the movies were, seemingly, among the most important events in their young lives." In these two volumes he has more than achieved this objective.

Alan's approach to chronicling the serials is spot-on. He rightly eschews the pretentious, pseudo-intellectual, analytical approach so typical of many of to-day's movie historians, arguing that "the structure of the serials is simply too fragile to withstand that type of scrutiny." Instead, in these books, he re-creates for us, via a dazzling collection of crystal-clear stills, lobby cards and posters, the visual excitement and dynamic action that are the very essence of the serial.

And what a treasure-trove of action images the serials have given us.

Rocketman, soaring like a silver bullet across the wooded canyon of Los Angeles.

Captain America, roaring along the highway on his super-charged motor cycle.

The Lone Ranger, thundering across the bad-lands on his mighty horse Silver.

This was the sort of action that set the pulse of every young boy racing. The sort of action we could endlessly imitate in our between episodes games. And, it's the sort of action to be found in the pages of these fine books. Indeed, some of the reproduced 'stills' have more kinetic motion in them than the average modern movie.

Both volumes are entirely complementary, there being no overlap of illustrated content. Indeed, 'Cliffhanger' is really 'Days of Thrills and Adventure' — Part 2. Each has the same format, being divided into several sections which separately deal with a different aspect of the serials, e.g. The Comic Book Heroes, Pulp Magazine and Radio Favorites, The Hooded Villains, Western Actioneers, The Heroines, Jungle Perils, The War Aces and The Stunt Men. Each section is prefaced by a short introduction and every still is captioned with a succinct, informative and often witty commentary. The majority of the illustrations has not seen publication elsewhere and include some fabulous stunts and interesting

'behind-the-scene shots. Page lay-out is excellent and perfectly enhances the visual excitement created by each still. Both books include a complete listing of sound serials arranged chronologically by studio. 'Cliffhanger' also offers a detailed index.

'Days of...' boasts an eight page introduction by William K. Everson which makes a number of salient points. Everson comments that "There is no (American) film serial which can call itself a masterpiece outside of its own little world." This is because the production methods and fixed format of the serials handicapped both actors and directors, and were more conducive to the development of ingenuity rather than artistic creativity. Everson continues "...the serials have not added one iota of development to either the art or the history of the film. One could sweep them all away, blot them out totally, and the blow to film history would not be a major one. Indeed, if the serial had never evolved at all, it is unlikely that the course of film would have been changed or diverted in any way."

Why then are serials vividly remembered by the viewer thirty, forty, even fifty years after they were first seen? The answer, to me, lies in the fact that the serial provides a visual manifestation of youth and all youth stands for: innocence, courage, optimism, the will to overcome any obstacle no matter how formidable. The serial writers, for all their deficiencies regarding logical plots, credible dialogue and believable character motivation, really understood youth and its requirements. Action, adventure, movement. The need for young muscles to flex, young arms to flail, young legs to leap. The need for young imaginations to roam freely over the incredible landscapes of Mystery Island and Mongo, Atoma and the Lost Planet, Atlantis and the Phantom Empire. The writers understood this and gave it to us in full measure. The result is, at its best, an almost poetic evocation of the energy and daring of youth.

So, as long as there are individuals of whatever age, who have a youthful outlook, the serials will continue to attract and hence survive. And as Everson suggests, these books can best be savoured by a youthful mind. "As you read through Mr. Barbour's recapitulation of the serials, however, I suggest that you don't 'look back,' but instead try to see them with the eyes of youth, as we saw them in those less complicated and certainly more innocent days — when the serials were as guileless and perfect and free of flaw and blemish as we were ourselves."

Amen to that.

*To my knowledge, "Days of Thrills and Adventure" is no longer in print but should be available from Cinema Specialty Shops and Convention Dealers. Hunt it out, it's worth the effort. The paperback edition of "Cliffhanger" should be readily obtainable at your local bookstore. Buy it, buy it, buy it.*

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* FINALLY — SERIAL WORLD LOOKS AT THE QUEEN OF SERIALS \*  
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\*\*\*\*\*

## FOUND — EL LOBO & PRINCE BARIN AKA RICHARD ALEXANDER

Photos By  
Thomas Abdo



**ABOVE...**Held at bay by Zorro, El Lobo Richard Alexander is seen in mob scene from Republic's *Zorro Rides Again*. **BELow** Mr. Alexander today signing autographs for thrilled fans. **RIGHT** — Richard watching Martha Raye accept JOAKIE AWARDS on Oct. 24th of last year.



### WHERE SERIAL WORLD FOUND RICHARD ALEXANDER

While covering the 2nd annual JOAKIE AWARDS (Jack Oakie Comedy Award) at the Universal Sheraton Hotel late last year for our sister publication FUNNY BUSINESS, host Paul Smith made mention of several guests in the audience. One name Paul mentioned was RICHARD ALEXANDER. Our ears perked up and we searched the crowd for Dick as other serial fanatics did. Immediately spotting the still tough looking Mr. Alexander we sent our SW photographer Tom Adbdo over to get some shots which you see on this page. Who can forget Richard in SOS COAST GUARD, ZORRO RIDES AGAIN and as BARIN in FLASH GORDON.

# CHICK CARTER DETECTIVE

By Charles McCleary

**Cast:**

Chick Carter	LYLE TALBOT
Rusty Farrell	DOUGLAS FOWLEY
Sherry Marvin	JULIE GIBSON
Ellen Dale	PAMELA BLAKE
Spud	EDDIE ACUFF
Dan Rankin	ROBERT ELLIOTT
Nick Pollo	GEORGE MEEKER
Vasky	LEONARD PENN
Joe Carney	CHARLES KING
Mack	JACK INGRAM
Jules Hoyt	JOEL FRIEDKIN
Frank Sharp	EDDIE PARKER
Creeper	FRANKIE DARRO

**Credits:**

Directed by	DERWIN ABRAHAMS
Produced by	SAM KATZMAN
Assistant Directors MIKE EASON and LEONARD SHAPIRO	
Photography	IRA H. MORGAN
Music by	LEE ZAHLER
Film Editor	EARL TURNER
Screen Play by	GEORGE H. PLYMPTON and HARRY FRASER

*Adapted from the Street and Smith character appearing in Shadow Magazine and Shadow Comics based on the radio program broadcast on the Mutual Network.*

*Columbia Pictures new serial, "Chick Carter, Detective," marks the first screen appearance of the master detective, Chick Carter, of Shadow Magazine, Shadow Comics and radio fame. Chick is the son of famous detective Nick Carter and his adventures can be followed monthly in the two magazines published by Street and Smith, the largest pulp magazine publishers in the country. Chick's radio adventures can be heard weekly in their usual half hour format.*

**Synopsis**

**CHAPTER 1 — CHICK CARTER TAKES OVER**

In order to pay a debt to Nick Pollo, an underworld figure, Joe Carney, owner of the Century Club and possessor of the famous Blue Diamond, plans to have the jewel stolen by a henchman in order to collect the \$100,000 insurance. However, Century Club singer Sherry Marvin, who is to wear the diamond, conspires to give Nick the real one in a cotton snowball and allow a fake jewel to be lifted.

During the show, newspaper photographer Spud Warner, there with Rusty Farrell, a reporter, playfully snatches one of the snowballs from Sherry's basket, causing her to throw Nick the wrong one. Sherry discovers this and gives the alarm.

The police, led by Lieutenant Chick Carter, arrive. Soon afterwards, Nick's thug, Vasky, spots Rusty and Jules Hoyt, a jewel expert leaving the club and forces them into a parked police car. The police give chase and the speeding auto crashes into a gas pump and the car bursts into flame.



**CHICK CARTER TODAY, Lyle Talbot one of the screens best known faces and great actors Photo by Thomas Abdo**

**CHAPTER 2 — JUMP TO ETERNITY**

Vasky leaps from the flaming car and escapes. Rusty saves the badly injured Hoyt from the wreckage.

At his apartment, Nick questions Sherry about the empty snowball she threw him at the Century Club. Sherry tells him that the snowball containing the diamond was marked with lipstick.

Suddenly, Dan Rankin, investigator for the insurance company, enters the room. Vasky draws his gun and backs out the window. Rusty and Spud are on the fire escape listening to the conversation. Rusty, while chasing the fleeing Vasky, falls headlong into an air-shaft and crashes through a skylight floors below.

**CHAPTER 3 — GRINDING WHEELS**

Rusty escapes injury when he lands on a pile of laundry. Later, instructed by Dan, Rusty warns Joe of Dan's arrival at the club with a search warrant. The investigator instead tails Joe's henchman, Mack, and overtakes him. But Vasky, hidden in Mack's car gets the drop on both men.

Now, in Dan's car, Vasky forces Mack to turn over a box he is carrying which contains the precious jewel. Dan nears a grade crossing as a speeding train approaches. Vasky shoots at Dan and leaps from the car as the train hits the car, smashing it to wreckage beneath its grinding wheels.

**CHAPTER 4 — CHICK CARTER TRAPPED**

Mack leaps from Dan's car before the train hits but Dan is killed. Vasky returns to Nick and gives him the jewel box. They find it empty. Mack has the imitation diamond and hides it in Joe's desk but Sherry gets it and phones Nick the news.

She also tells Nick that Mack has gone to a mountain

hideout. However, Mack has been followed by Chick, Rusty and Spud who question him concerning Dan. Vasky, sent by Nick, sets fire to the cabin. With the windows boarded and the door locked, all inside are trapped as the flames mount.

#### CHAPTER 5 — OUT OF CONTROL

Mack finds an axe, breaks through the boarded windows and escapes as the others also flee the burning cabin. Back at the Century Club, Nick, now Joe's partner until Joe can pay his debt, asks Sherry for the diamond. She goes to her apartment with Vasky along for protection.

Mack sees this and informs the police. Chick arrives on the scene and closes in with his men. Vasky flees but encounters Rusty, who is just leaving the car. The thug overpowers Rusty, places his unconscious body in the auto and sends it down an incline out of control.

#### CHAPTER 6 — CHICK CARTER'S QUEST

Rusty is saved by a policeman who sees the vehicle going out of control. He is revived and returns to his office. Spud tells him of a conversation between Sherry and a mystery man concerning a Blue Diamond and a snowball marked with lipstick. Recalling the one Spud took from Sherry's basket, the two men race to the city dump where the office rubbish has been sent.

Meanwhile, Chick hears of a case of explosives picked up in error by a city collection truck and also hurries to the dump. At the dump, Spud gets in a fight with a truck driver and is knocked unconscious. Chick arrives to see the explosives dumped near Spud, lodging in a blazing bonfire nearby. The explosives go off.

#### CHAPTER 7 — CHICK CARTER'S FRAME-UP

Spud regains consciousness and manages to dive for cover before the blast occurs. Chick questions Rusty and Spud about the snowball, which is found to be empty.

At the club, a new employee, Ellen Dale, is searching Sherry's dressing room and discovers the diamond in a cold cream jar. Sherry later discovers the diamond to be missing and suspects Ellen. When Spud visits the club, Ellen drops the diamond into his pocket without his knowledge. Later, he is forced outside and driven away in a taxi by three thugs.

Vasky has noticed Ellen's actions and follows the fleeing auto. Suddenly, a heavy truck speeds from a side street straight for the taxi. There is a crash!

#### CHAPTER 8 — CHICK CARTER GIVES CHASE

Spud miraculously survives the wreck. While Chick, who had trailed along in a police car, arrests the abductors, Vasky holds up Spud and takes the diamond.

Later, Hoyt, the jewel expert, phones Chick to tell him that the diamond Sherry was wearing the night of the robbery was an expensive imitation. Chick and the police close in on the club and a free-for-all starts. During the melee, Vasky notices Chick nearing the stage switchboard and throws an iron bar at him. Knocked into the switchboard, Chick's body is hidden by a blinding flash of electricity!

#### CHAPTER 9 — SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT

Chick narrowly escapes electrocution when the iron bar short circuits the board behind him. Vasky flees. Mack goes after him but is shot and wounded by the treacherous Vasky.

Trying to win Sherry's confidence, Ellen goes to the entertainer's apartment to tell her that she is being shadowed by the police. The wounded Mack enters and he and Sherry plan a getaway. Ellen is forced to help the two conspirators.

Warned by a police shadow who has seen Ellen and Mack

enter the building, Chick takes up the chase. Mack orders Ellen to leave the car. As she runs away, he starts the car straight toward her.

#### CHAPTER 10 — RUN TO EARTH

Sherry grabs the wheel, swerving the car away from Ellen. As Chick's police car approaches, Mack and Sherry flee.

Spud and Ellen decide to do some police work on their own and find Sherry. They finally locate her at an aunt's ranch. Mack traps Spud outside the house just as Vasky and two aides draw near. Concealed in a shed, Spud and Mack are horrified to see Vasky prepare to drive a heavy truck into the flimsy building. Chick and Rusty arrive at the ranch just as Vasky crashes the truck into the shed, demolishing it with Spud and Mack inside.

#### CHAPTER 11 — HURLED INTO SPACE

Though badly injured, Mack escapes from the shed and is pursued by Vasky. Spud is revived. Chick and his men take the thugs into custody.

Rusty and Spud learn from Chick that Mack was found wounded and has since died. When Spud and the two girls leave for town, they find Vasky in the back of their car. He orders the girls out and drives off with Spud. Warned by Ellen, the police close in. Spud takes a desperate gamble and throws a blanket over Vasky's head. The car hurtles into the canyon below.

#### CHAPTER 12 — CHICK CARTER FACES DEATH

Vasky frees himself from the wreckage and escapes. Chick and Rusty pull Spud from the wreck. He is sent to the hospital.

Hoping to bring the Blue Diamond mystery to a close, the police broadcast that Mack is going to sing. Vasky decides to disappear for a while, and with Gorman, an aide, he seizes an ambulance for a getaway car, not knowing that Spud is safe inside. Chick and Rusty are soon in hot pursuit. Vasky detours into the grounds of a rock-crushing plant, then abandons the ambulance. Chick and Vasky get into a terrific fight but Chick loses his balance and falls onto the conveyor belt leading to the crusher.

#### CHAPTER 13 — RENDEZVOUS WITH MURDER

Chick is saved when Rusty overpowers Gorman and throws the switch turning off the crushing machine. Spud is found in the ambulance.

Back in town, Vasky overpowers Creeper, Nick's secretary, and taking the imitation diamond, gives it to Joe who then pays him \$2,000. Vasky is held up outside the Century Club. He blames Joe and vows vengeance.

Planning to scoop Chick and Rusty, Spud contacts Joe, then gets a dummy money package to hand over to Vasky. Vasky discovers the trick and pursues Spud to a quarry. A fight starts between the two and Spud into the pool below.

#### CHAPTER 14 — CHICK CARTER SETS A TRAP

Spud is rescued from the pool by the caretaker who also drives Vasky off. Later, Chick questions Joe concerning the diamond. Ellen, working at the club as a cigarette girl, comes in to identify the gem and declares it an expensive imitation. They plan to force Sherry into revealing where the real diamond is hidden.

Ellen is in Sherry's dressing room when an explosion from the wardrobe closet sends smoke into the room. Nick enters suddenly, gun in hand, and demands the real diamond.



#### CHAPTER 15 — CHICK CARTER WINS OUT

Chick, who has heard the explosion, tries desperately to force the door. Suddenly it opens and Nick walks out. Ellen and Sherry are brought out by Chick, unharmed.

Spud comes in from the alley with a snowball which he found there. It is empty.

Still determined to get even with Joe, Vasky stealthily

enters the club, is trapped by Chick and arrested for the murders of Dan and Mack. Chick then rounds up Joe and Nick and breaks the news that Ellen is a special investigator. Almost moved to tears by Sherry's sincerity in repenting for her part in the affair, Spud takes a handkerchief from his pocket and out comes the real Blue Diamond. The case is officially closed.

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# The Range Fighter

(Davis Distributing Corporation, 1926 [?]) 10 Chapters

Directors: Clifford S. Elfelt, Paul Hurst, and Forrest Sheldon

Story: Frank Howard Clark, Jay Inman Kane, and George Hively

Screenplay: George Hively and Frank Howard Clark

Producer: Clifford S. Elfelt

**Cast:**

Ken Maynard	.....	Terry Baldwin
Dorothy Devore	.....	Judith Kellard
George Nichols		
J.P. McGowan		
Sheldon Lewis		
Joseph Swickard		
Buck Black		
Billy Franey		
Billy Gills		
Charles Whitaker		
Frank Ellis		
Dick Sutherland		
Hank Bell		
"Tarzan"		

Few serial buffs realize that Ken Maynard starred in this silent serial, released on the states-right market. It was assembled from segments of the features "\$10,000 Reward," "Fighting Courage," "The Demon Rider," "The Haunted Range," and "The Grey Vulture" to capitalize on the popularity of Maynard and get more mileage out of his earlier films. Although the author's source information indicates 1926 as the release year, it is possible that the serial was not released until somewhat later, since it is known to have had a talking prologue, and music and sound effects. However, the film could have been recalled and these elements added after its initial release.

**EPISODE 1**

Terry Baldwin is left a huge ranch and power-site by his uncle, Anse Baldwin, while the old man cuts off his step-son with one dollar. The will provides, however, that Terry clear his uncle's name of the charge of having murdered his partner and neighbor, Stephen Kellard; that he clear up the title of the power-site, which has been jumped by the power interests; and that he turn over half of that property to the heirs of Stephen Kellard.

Terry goes to the ranch at once to live up to the terms of the will. He finds a gang in operation there headed by a notorious badman named Slade and he receives threats of violence if he doesn't abandon the property and leave the country. Slade is aided and abetted by Ralph Kellard, weakling son of Stephen, whose sister, Judith, is having hard work keeping the boy from the influence of Slade. Both Ralph and his sister spurn Terry as the nephew of a murderer, but Terry falls in love with the girl and calmly announces that he is going to stay, fight it out, and become better acquainted.

On the following day in town young Kellard goads Terry into a horse race as part of a plot to eliminate Terry in the easiest way possible. Terry accepts the challenge and makes

the terms of the bet that the loser will be obligated to do as the winner directs for a period of six months. Kellard is sure of the outcome for the gang has placed men along the trail with instructions to stop Terry in any way possible. He outwits them one after another until the riders are straightened away for home when one of the gang sets off a blast and Terry and his horse disappear in the terrific explosion.

**EPISODE 2**

But Terry and his horse leaped aside and down the side of a hill just in time. He finds himself on a short cut to town and manages to overhaul Kellard to win by a neck. He makes the terms of the bet that Kellard leave the town and state for a period of six months. He is doing this as much for the girl's sake as for the boy's — to get him away from evil influence until he has time to come to his senses. Kellard leaves in a rage and Judith, when Terry confronts her and begs for her friendship, tells him that she hates him.

With that Terry, having been told by the foreman of the ranch that his uncle had mentioned a New York lawyer in connection with the powersite deed, hurries East. The lawyer is in league with one Mark Holman, head of the interests that have jumped Terry's land. He throws Terry off the track by telling him that another man had the deed, but had sent it to Holman who claims ownership. Terry goes west again to wrest the deed from Holman. At a water-stop he misses his train and is left without money. Starting to walk the remaining distance to Holman's town, he is held up by a bandit who has just robbed Holman, and forced to exchange clothes. Terry is mistaken for the bandit by a sheriff's posse. He is pursued and takes refuge in the cabin of a nester. But cow-punchers who have seen him, report to the sheriff. The sheriff enters the cabin and seeing Terry's boots behind a curtain — his gloved hand clutching the shade — he orders him out. As there is no reply the sheriff pumps six shots into the curtain.

**EPISODE 3**

As the last shot rings out the sheriff tears away the curtain and finds the gun there, the boots and the glove — but no Terry. He leaves swearing vengeance. Terry emerges from his hiding place in a packing case, and announces that he has no time to identify himself now but must get to the power-site and get the deed from Holman. His pockets are lined with money once more for the bandit had forgotten his purse when exchanging clothes with Terry.

Mark Holman in the town near the power-site has received word from New York that Terry is on his way. He has identified the bandit as Terry because he rode Terry's white horse. Thinking that Terry has found the deed to the power-site, that was in the wallet, Holman offers a bunch of his gorillas, headed by Buck Schofield, \$5,000 to get the deed by hook or crook. There he saves the daughter of the engineer in charge from a terrible death, but has to ride on to escape the fury of the pursuing gang. He takes refuge with a rancher whose wife is boarding a bunch of Hollywood bathing girls. The gang follows him there and lies in wait for him. When night falls

Terry determines to get to the power-site and get what information he can of the condition of affairs from the engineer and his daughter. He starts out and one of the bandits fires on him. Terry falls on his face apparently dead.

#### EPISODE 4

Terry, however, had seen the gun flash and thrown himself prone. He quickly rises to his feet and, dodging behind trees and building, reaches his faithful horse and gallops off. He reaches the power-site just in time to save the engineer's daughter from a savage assault by Schofield, who goes off swearing vengeance. Terry hears that Holman has returned to his home town and follows on. He goes to the hotel, forgetting for the moment that he is being hunted. There he is confronted by the sheriff, but outwits him and escapes. Riding hard he comes upon Kinkaid, the bandit, who has returned looking for his money. The bandit has stolen a car in which is Marjorie Holman, daughter of Mark and whom Terry had met in New York. Terry over-takes the car and knocks out Kinkaid. He takes Marjorie back home and being introduced to her father is astounded when Holman draws a gun — calls him a crook — and demands the return of his money and papers. It looks as if the game is up.

#### EPISODE 5

As Holman turns to order his daughter to call the sheriff Terry grabs the gun. He tells Holman that he is not bandit — doesn't know anything about the papers; that he is in no position now to prove his innocence; but will do soon and will gain possession of the power-site as well. He escapes and takes refuge again in the cabin of the nester. There he absently pulls out the wallet taken from the bandit. It is empty, Holman having abstracted the money, but he feels a piece of paper in one of the pockets. He pulls it out and there is the missing deed. In the meantime Holman has informed the sheriff that Terry is in town again. His daughter overhears him and notifies Terry. Terry escapes through a window and takes Marjorie home in order to cover her. When he returns to town he finds that Kinkaid and his gang have held up the hotel, abducted a bunch of dancing girls and have made for Holman's ranch to clean it out. Terry tears after them.

The sheriff reaches the hotel only to find that Terry has followed Kinkaid to Holman's and the posse follows hot-foot. In the meantime Terry arrives at the ranch and holds up the gang. He orders the girls to take the guns of the bandits, but as he turns to face one, Kinkaid jumps and bears him to the ground. He is in their power once more.

#### EPISODE 6

In the midst of this new turn of affairs the sheriff arrives and holds up the entire company. He is about to arrest and jail Terry along with the rest when the New York lawyer arrives. He had been notified by Holman of the loss of the deed and hurried west to see if he could not handle Terry. He identifies Terry and soothes the boy by telling him that they all want to compromise in the matter of the power-site. Terry agrees and Holman invites him to a conference the following day.

Terry believed in the integrity of these men and started out for the power-site town. He is soon aware that their honesty is a sham for he is waylaid by the gang again. Through the wonderful stamina of his horse as well as his own wit, he succeeds in getting away and reaching the ranch where he stayed before. The gang follows him and lies in wait. As the lights go out they enter, but get into the girl's room. The bedlam that follows rouses the house. Terry goes down to face the bandits. He is shot at and downed, but the mistress of the house

appears with a shot-gun and chases them away. In the meantime the engineer's daughter at the power-site has found the copy of the deed that Terry had left with her and, seeing that it must be filed by noon of the next day, she rides through the night to tell him. Terry has wired to her that he will be back this day so she is sure she can reach him — and just as sure that he knows nothing of the time limit. She arrives in the night shortly after the raid. She leaves the message with the mistress of the ranch and rides home.

Next morning Terry, having arranged to have fast horses along the fifty mile trail to the country court-house, starts off. He is pursued by horse and automobile. The hours and minutes speed by as one by one he surmounts or dodges each obstacle thrown in his way. At five minutes before the noon hour, and with the court-house almost in sight, he is roped from his horse and tied up to a tree, while his captor, Schofield scurries back to the power-site.

#### EPISODE 7

Left in charge of two bandits, Terry is in despair, but his horse, who has followed him, succeeds in releasing his bonds. He rides for the court-house after having overpowered his guards, and files his deed on time. The partners of Holman in the power-site, hearing of Terry's success, are for compromising and Terry appearing before them offers to sell his rights for \$500,000 after having been offered \$50,000. This is spurned by Holman and Terry is defied to do what he can against their influence and riches. Terry leaves knowing his rights and with his time growing short, he determines to return to his own ranch and try to find the man who murdered Stephen Kellard, thus clearing his uncle's name, which was one of the provisions of the will. He is informed of an attack on the engineer's daughter by Schofield and, riding pell-mell for the power-site, he captures Schofield and drags him before Holman, informing that gentlemen that his bandit has agreed to turn state's evidence. At this Holman agrees to Terry's terms. He is about to sign an agreement when Schofield black-jacks Terry from behind and starts to carry off the girl.

#### EPISODE 8

Terry rises quickly and, catching the fleeing Schofield, they indulge in a fight to the death. They are on top of the dam and after a terrific struggle, Terry, with one last desperate effort breaks loose and knocks the bandit into the yawning chasm. He leaves immediately for his ranch to accomplish the last provision of his uncle's will.

In his absence the bandit gang led by Slade, who was in the pay of Anse Baldwin's step-son Alex Forster, had actually turned to robbery. On the morning after Terry's return the sheriff stops at his ranch and learns from Terry's sister, who is on a visit from the East, that Terry is riding the range. The sheriff informs the girl that Black Hawk has pulled a job and for Terry to follow them. Terry is certain that these bandits know something of the death of Kellard and he is constantly looking to get one of them alone to try to make him talk. He sees the band riding pell-mell. He is suspicious and follows them. They enter a lonely cabin. He follows them — sees them quarreling over a sack of money — and holds them up. He secures the sack and is about to force them to tell all they know about the murder of Kellard when Black Hawk steps on a trap and Terry plunges from sight through the floor.

#### EPISODE 9

Terry, however, had his rope around the entire band when he was thrown into the cellar, and as they lose their balance and fall, he climbs over their backs and escapes. The sheriff and his posse, however, have arrived on a nearby hill. They

see the white horse escaping with his rider and the sheriff directs two men to follow him while the rest go to the cabin. Terry's sister is with the sheriff and she is sure the white horse is Terry's. The sheriff captures the bandits and demands to know which one is Black Hawk. They say that Black Hawk is Terry Baldwin and that he has fooled the entire community. The sheriff ropes the outlaws and starts on Terry's trail.

In the meanwhile Terry, unable to shake off two pursuers and thinking them bandits, waylays them. He knocks out one and ties up the other to a tree. Starting off again for town to turn over the money to the sheriff, he finds that the bag which he had tied to his saddle, has disappeared. He sees a trail leading away from the spot where he had left his horse. He mounts and follows it. The sheriff meanwhile has found the tied up deputy and is again told that the bandit is Terry. Terry's sister hears this. She steals away and succeeds in reaching the ranch ahead of the sheriff. She thinks Terry really is the bandit but is determined to save him. Terry denies this but realizing that he cannot produce the money he must get away until he can produce it. His sister distracts the attention of the posse, which has surrounded the house, and Terry escapes at the same time as he the bandit gang.

Terry thinking that one of the bandits may have followed him and re-stolen the money follows them. They hold up a party of tourists and steal their automobile. Terry, however, cuts across lots and comes upon them just as they reach a narrow trail beside a yawning chasm. He casts his rope and it catches fast just as the car plunges with its human freight to the bottom of the rocky canyon.

#### EPISODE 10

But Terry's rope caught around the shoulders of Slade, the driver. He pulls the bandit up to the top of the cliff just as the sheriff arrives. He identifies Slade as Black Hawk, but the

sheriff refuses to believe it. However there appears on the scene Jasper, Terry's colored cook. He had found the sack of money. He had intended to keep it, but when he found out that his master was in danger he had followed fast to prove Terry's innocence.

But Terry's peace of mind is soon rudely interrupted for Slade, or Black Hawk, escapes from jail and, organizing his gang, starts out on fresh outrages. Alex Forster has appeared, bent upon getting the property, and the gang is determined to lay Terry low this time and no mistake. The gang sends him a warning to get out or suffer the consequences. Terry calls on the sheriff to watch for his signal that night. In the meantime Ralph Kellard returns from his exile. He states to his sister that he has come back to tell the truth. Slade was the murderer of their father. He has come back before the time limit to help Terry. At this time Slade has set his gang in motion, but he is caught by Terry and forced to tell that Forster is behind it all.

Terry ties him to a tree, signals the sheriff and the whole gang is captured. Meanwhile Alex Forster goes to the Kellard ranch and makes love to Judith. She spurns him and when he tries to abduct her Ralph attacks him. Forster knocks Ralph down with a club and pursues Judith up a steep cliff. Ralph recovers sufficiently to ride for Terry. They meet just as Ralph is about to fall from exhaustion and Terry is informed of Judith's peril and given the name of the murderer.

Terry catches up to Forster just as he is about to grasp Judith high on the rocky sides of the cliff. He ropes Forster and gains Judith's side. There she tells him what she has learned and that she never did hate him. Terry tells her of his love and, taking her in his arms informs her that she is rich for half of the power-site is hers.

THE END



**KEN MAYNARD**  
"THE RANGE FIGHTER"



**KEN MAYNARD**  
"THE RANGE FIGHTER"



# The Black Book

By Buck Rainey

(Pathé, July 21, 1929) 10 Chapters, 2 reels each

(Pathé's last serial and the last made by the Ray-Miller team)

*Director: Spencer G. Bennet*

*Co-Director: Tom Storey*

*Author: Joseph Anthony Roach*

*Production Manager: Ray Heinze*

*Assistant Directors: Ralph Hogue and Charles Stevens*

*Chief Photographer: Edward Snyder*

*Film Editor: Joe Kane*

**Cast:**

Allene Ray	.....	Dora Drake
Walter Miller	.....	Ted Bradley
Frank Lackteen	.....	Valdez
Edith London	.....	Mrs. Valdez
Willie Fung	.....	Tin Lung
Marie Mosquini	.....	Sally
Edward Cecil	.....	Limpy Lambert
John Webb Dillon	.....	LeBec
Paul Panzer	.....	The Hawk
Fred Malatesta	.....	Sudro
Floyd Adams	.....	Michael
Olga Vanna	.....	Maid
Jock Fraser	.....	Crook
Clay de Roy	.....	Crook
Evan Pearson	.....	Crook

## Chapter 1 — Secret of the Vault

Dora Blake, posing as an art student, secretly affiliated with the police, is watching enemies of her uncle, Tony LeBec. She is loved by Ted Bradley, a wealthy waster. When he is reduced to his last fifty dollars, he buys an interest in a taxi driven by Tin Lung. Sally Davis, supposedly a model, but really a spy for Dora's enemies, frames Dora with the story that a certain "Black Book" which is of value to her uncle, lies in the Imperial vaults. She goes in search of it and Bradley, who has vainly sought to dissuade her, and arrives just as Officer Sullivan who has escorted Dora, is murdered. As Bradley, held by two men, watches, a hood is thrown over Dora's face and she is drawn out of sight by a great hand.

## Chapter 2 — The Death Race

Dora is a prisoner in the hands of Limpy Lambert, a deadly enemy of her uncle who is to arrive in the city that night. He plans to kill her in a manner that will appear accidental. They take her to an old house near the wharves. She manages to telephone to Ted who rushes to the house. He is too late — Dora, bound and gagged, is lying in a locker, while machinery that will grind her into a pulp, is set in motion by Limpy Lambert. She watches death approach. Ted is knocked down and thrown into the locker to share Dora's fate.

### Chapter 3 — A Shot in the Night

Senor Valdez, whose welfare is locked up in the Black Book, arrives with his wife in an airplane. He receives a radiogram from Sudro, Le Bec's secretary and henchman of the enemy, that he has a Black Book, without which the other Book is useless, and warns Valdez that Dora must not be permitted to see Le Bec. Dora and Bradley are rescued by Tim Lung. They go to the wharf and meet Le Bec and Sudro. At Dora's apartment, Sudro shoots Le Bec. Dora escapes with the Black Book and Valdez, after shooting Sudro, escapes.

### Chapter 4 — The Danger Sign

The Black Book in Dora's possession is stolen and when she goes in search of it, Valdez removes the "Danger" and "Detour" signs along the road she is traveling. She is hurled over an embankment.

### Chapter 5 — The Flaming Trap

Limpy Lambert has been arrested for the murder of a policeman, and Valdez seeks his life. The latter, determined to rid himself of Dora, Limpy, and Sally, the latter's sweetheart, as well as Bradley, arranges to have them observe him secrete a Black Book in a garage and when they go to recover it, the place is set afire and becomes an inferno. Sally, Dora, and Bradley face a terrible death.

### Chapter 6 — The Black Van

The two women and man are rescued by Tin Lung, just as the flames are about to swallow them up. By means of fingerprints, Dora gets on the trail of Hawklike, one of Valdez's henchmen. Sally is about to reveal Hawklike's identity to Dora when a shot sounds and she crumbles at Dora's feet. Dora and Bradley go to Fernwood where Dora's stepmother and stepfather are living and Valdez holds them up, taking the Black Book from Bradley. Bradley battles to recover it and in the melee, Dora is captured by the crooks and carried away in a black delivery wagon.

### Chapter 7 — The Fatal Hour

Dora, by a clever ruse, escapes from the wagon and meeting Valdez tells him she has both Black Books. She tells him that Le Bec, her uncle, was not killed but is convalescent

and that she aims to take the books to him. That evening as Dora, Ted and Le Bec start to decode the Black Books, the lights go out and the three are soon engaged in a struggle with Valdez's henchmen. The lights go on and the books are gone! The room suddenly is rocked by a violent explosion.

### Chapter 8 — The Mystery Mill

Le Bec is rendered unconscious by the explosion and Dora removes him to Fernwood. Valdez tries to poison Le Bec's medicine, but is foiled by a maid. Tin Lung informs Dora and Bradley that the crooks maintain headquarters at an old mill and they go there to hold up the gang and recover the Black Books. They are overpowered and thrown into a grain shaft. Valdez turns on the grain and death by suffocation menaces them.

### Chapter 9 — The Assassin Strikes

Again Tin Lung rescues the two and Dora learns of a rendezvous of Valdez and his gang in a cabin in the canyon. Valdez has confided the two Black Books to his wife who goes with him to the cabin. Dora, who is a Fernwood with Bradley, is about to leave for the cabin when Valdez and his men storm the house. Bradley is wounded and the crooks are about to stab Le Bec when Dora throws herself upon his body.

### Chapter 10 — Out of the Shadows

Mounted police, attracted by gunfire, appear on the scene in time to rescue both Le Bec and Dora. The gunmen are captured, but Valdez escapes. At the cabin is Valdez's wife with the Black Books, and unknown to her Tin Lung is lying bound and gagged in a closet. His struggles attract the woman's attention and she releases him. Dora and Bradley arrive, recover the books and Valdez commits suicide. The secret of the Black Book relates to a rich platinum deposit on Le Bec's land. Dora and Bradley are married.

**THE END**



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# Action-Packed CLIFFHANGERS



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## Action-Packed CLIFFHANGERS

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With the aid of Longhast, a telepathic half-breed, and by means of an invisible ray and a radio-controlled glider, Zorro plays on the Indians' superstitions in an attempt to grab their land.

When the Indians' chief is murdered, his daughter Ruth is in love with Tom. Zorro to him for help. Tom manages to expose the plot and rout the villains.



ZORRO RIDES AGAIN

Marsden is ruthlessly trying to gain control of the California Yurutan Railroad Co. owned jointly by Philip Andrews and Vega. A masked stranger who gives them a warning to stop is the end of the railroad and who admires him for his beauty.

When Vega is mortally wounded, Zorro reveals himself as Vega's nephew whom everyone believed to be a weak and spineless loafer. Zorro vows to avenge his uncle's death.

Zorro continually rescues the Indians from Marsden's henchmen. When Marsden plans to wreck the train, Zorro thwarts his efforts by throwing the switch in the nick of time with his Argentine whip.

After miraculously escaping from an airplane crash, Zorro confronts the villains with enough evidence to convict Marsden.



LAW OF THE WILD

Sheldon, a young rancher, has raped and ruined Rex, "King of the Wild Horses," and gained the animal's friendship. Rini, a courageous police dog is another of Sheldon's pals. The dog and horse soon become firm friends.

Shelton, one of Sheldon's men, steals Rex and trains him for the race track. After winning a race with Rex, Shelly is killed and Sheldon is accused of the deed. Sheldon feels he can prove his innocence.

With the help of Rini, Sheldon compiles the necessary evidence to expose himself and clear out the murderous gang. Meanwhile, Rini is busily trying to win a fortune in a big sweepstakes race.



HOLT OF THE SECRET SERVICE

Holt, United States Secret Service agent, is assigned to track down con-artisters. Getting pretty Kay Drew, another operative, to help, he plans to trap the gang by posing as a desperate criminal.

Holt and Kay trap one of theburglars.

As the names of the other two are revealed, Holt learns Holt's real identity and a fight ensues as the cathe

plunges over the rapids.

Holt miraculously survives and as he searches the woods for shelter upon the outlaws camp, Holt meets a woman who pretends to be a widow named Kay. She is captured, however, and Holt is tortured so badly that Holt breaks down and reveals where the planes are hidden.

Holt breaks free and a fight breaks out which starts a fire. The fire attracts others who help Holt round up the gang. Holt and Kay plan to make their vacation a honeymoon.

Future *Action-Packed Cliffhangers* packages will include such memorable serials as *Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe*, *The Perils of Pauline*, *The Phantom Empire*, *Undersea Kingdom*, *The Mystery Squadron* and *The Adventures of Smilin' Jack*. For

more information contact Jim Welch, Program Director, S.C. ETV, P.O. Drawer L, Columbia, S.C. 29250; Phone: (803) 758-7333.

...to be continued on S.C.ETV

## FOREWORD

# Riders of Death Valley

By Eric Hoffman

After viewing RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY (1941), it is difficult to keep from wondering what might have been if Universal's "Million Dollar Serial With The Million Dollar Cast" had been handled right.

At the time when RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY came about, revenue from the serials being produced by Universal Pictures had been going down and the studio, in order to cut corners, ordered that one of their upcoming serial productions would be a low-budgeted western adventure that would utilize a limited number of sets, possibly be padded out like crazy with stock footage (with the main players costumed to match said stock footage...a practice carried out to a fare-thee-well in some of the studio's final serials, such as THE SCARLET HORSEMAN and LOST CITY OF THE JUNGLE) and, as Elaine and George Geltzer put it in their excellent article on Ford Beebe in issue No. 13 of Screen Facts, handled by "second-rate actors who could ride, fight, and read short sentences."

The task of putting together a story-line fell to veteran western and serial scribe Oliver Drake and he came up with a 15 page treatment that suited the situation.

And then, something happened. Universal had just started experiencing a new surge of interest among film audiences in one of the genres did it best, the horror film. Its high-budgeted, well-made SON OF FRANKENSTEIN had given the genre a new shot in the arm, sparking a second "horror cycle" with two or three years of the demise of the first one during the sound era.

Then there had been the success of Republic Pictures' version of the popular radio serial THE LONE RANGER, sending serial rentals upward again.

The lesson to be learned by Universal from what happened with their own production and Republic's success in the serial area wasn't lost. In other words, a case of "original thinking" in the front office brought about the decision to try to provide that special "shot in the arm" once again. The studio would come up with a "big" serial for audiences. And what could be more natural for such a project than one of the genres that seemed to be a specialty in the studio's 'B' picture output?

It was probably this desire to rush the "super-serial" out as quickly as possible that prompted Universal to take the planned "cheater" and turn it into a special attraction.

Oliver Drake's original story, in the meantime, had undergone scripting by writers Sherman Lower, Jack O'Donnell, George Plympton and Basil Dickey, meeting the specifications that had been handed down by the front office. All that was needed now was the casting of roles and the necessary pre-production work for the project to get underway.

The decision by Universal's front office to make a special production out of the original, less expensive project, was aided by an unbelievable stroke of good fortune. Universal either had under contract, or had just signed up, a surprisingly impressive group of main players, most of whom were associated in one way or another with the western, serial or action genre.

In the 15 episode serial, the film's title characters were a group of, for want of a better description, free-lance vigilantes who had banded together to battle outlaws that were plaguing the Death Valley region during the frontier days.

Naturally, there would have to be a leader and the role of Jim Benton, the leader (and organizer) of the Riders, fell to Dick Foran, who had already established himself not only in westerns (thanks to a series of 'B' westerns for Warners and an earlier western serial for Universal, WINNERS OF THE WEST, the year before RIDERS was released) but in various roles. Foran's talents, which had stood him in good stead in roles ranging from the intensely dramatic in such films as Warners' THE BLACK LEGION, with Humphrey Bogart, to the comedic, as in several of Universal's 'B' comedies, included a fine singing voice, which had been honed with some operatic training. It had been on display not only in regular films, but had put Foran in the ranks of singing cowboys due to the western series he starred in for Warner Brothers.

In Drake's original story treatment for RIDERS, Jim Benton's second-in-command, Tombstone, was portrayed as a grizzled character who complained a lot. That concept was thrown out the window with the casting of one of the greats in western film history, Buck Jones, who was beginning his comeback on the screen (it would hit its peak with the ROUGH RIDERS series for Monogram soon afterwards). To some fans' way of thinking, being cast in what was essentially a supporting character role may have been a bit of a come-down for the still impressive screen hero. But in another sense, it was almost a means of counter-acting one of the strangest pieces of the casting Jones had ever been given (as well as, in my opinion, one of the worst); that of the crooked sheriff in Republic Pictures' WAGONS WESTWARD!

Not having seen the original script for RIDERS, it is hard to say just how much was beefed up in the role of Tombstone for Jones. But, in my own opinion, it is obvious that the part was revised a bit, giving Jones some scenes of his own, as well as some nice moments where he could not only thrill audiences anew with his brand of action, but also maintain that touch of humor he used to add to his characters. In short, while it may have been one of a group, Jones gave his all to the role of Rider No. 2.

Leo Carrillo was his familiar screen image of Pancho (and hardly seemed to have aged a day when he played him again in the "Cisco Kid" series), right down to the mangled English. Guinn "Big Boy" Williams could be considered the "slob" of the Riders, as Borax Bill. He and Carrillo made a sort of team on their own, providing some comedy relief to the heroics with their regular arguments, although they were more than handy to have on hand for the action.

An unusual touch of casting, even though it was as one of the sub-good guys, was that of Glenn Strange, better known as one of the more reliable heavies in westerns. For once, Glenn was cast on the side of law and order as Tex, looking quite at home among the heroes.

One character apparently intended for someone whose presence wouldn't really be noticed (or needed) that often; in

otherwords, somebody whose absence wouldn't make that much of an impression.

It is rather disconcerting to note that while some effort was made to change the character, there was not too much that could be done. To Noah Beery Jr. went the (to a degree) thankless role of Smokey. Beery's character would be on hand at one point, disappear at another and pop up again out of nowhere without any kind of explanation most of the time.

And speaking of explanations, just as a personal side thought, just what **did** the "Riders" do to support themselves? Obviously, they weren't under salary for the good deeds they performed for the Death Valley region community of Panamint.

While the main heroes of the piece constituted a surprisingly strong line-up for such an adventure, the casting of the main villain turned out to be a real shot in the arm for the production. Charles Bickford made his only serial appearance as Wolf Reade, leader of the notorious "Wolf Pack." And in spite of what some might feel the "comedown" of appearing in a serial, Bickford played the badman with evil relish, making Reade a villain you had to hate and admire for his outright, unrepentant nastiness and readiness to pull a doublecross if it was to his advantage.

Fans of western villainy could see at once that Bickford's character had a solid back-up group of sagebrush nasties working for him. I don't think you could find a more nasty bunch (outside of a Republic western or serial) than Lon

Chaney Jr. (Butch, Wolf Reade's chief lieutenant), Roy Barcroft, Dick Alexander, Jack Rockwell, and Ethan Laidlaw.

Giving the orders for the story's deviltry were two western veterans (both features and serials), James Blaine (who had bedevilled Johnny Mack Brown in at least two of his western chapter-plays for Universal) and Monte Blue, as that conniving duo of Kirby and Davis.

Jeanne Kelly (who would later become known as Jean Brooks) had her moments as the heroine of the piece, getting a chance to do more than just scream in times of peril.

Ford Beebe and Ray Taylor co-directed, doing their best to keep things moving. But someone, **RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY** seemed to me more like a 12 episode adventure that had been padded out to 15 chapters.

Much was made by Universal in selling "The Million Dollar Serial..." (including the film's title song, **RIDE ALONG** by Milton Rosen and Everett Carter, being made available in sheet music, a rarity for such a genre), yet it didn't accomplish what it was meant to.

Perhaps the main thing that makes **RIDERS** enjoyable for about 85% of the length of the serial is watching its cast of main players at work. But in the end, Ford Beebe summed the whole problem up in a quote in **SCREEN FACTS NO. 13**:

"Had we known the kind of players we would have, we could have written a serial that would have been worthy of their individual talents."



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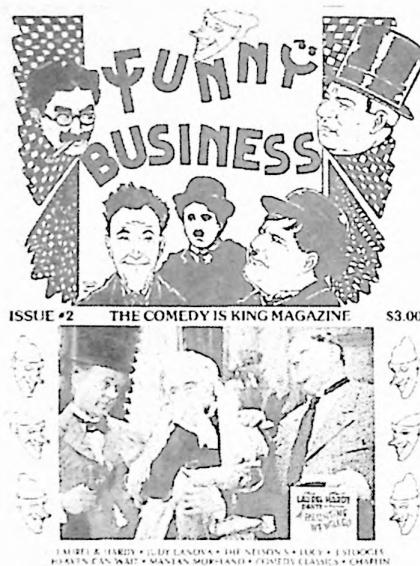
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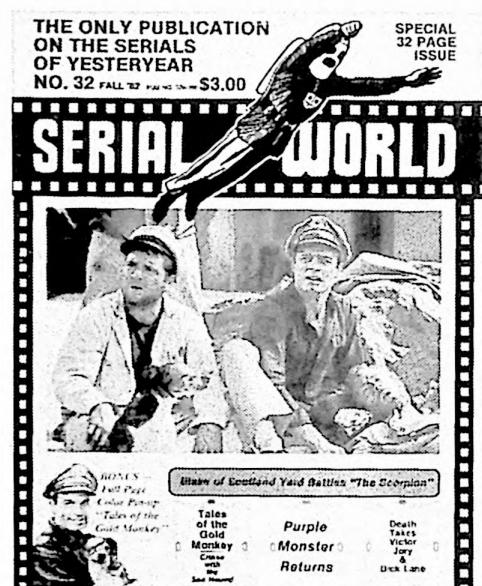
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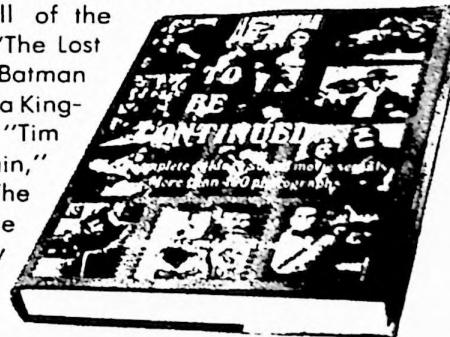
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